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The political geographies of diaspora strategies: rethinking the 'sending state'

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Abstract

Diaspora strategies have been at the forefront of new studies of the political geographies of state-led transnationalism, contributing important insights into the widespread socio-economic impacts of initiatives used to engage émigrés in extra-territorial nation-building. The conceptualization of the 'sending state' as a central territorialized bureaucratic form has however contributed to binary framings of diasporic space by failing to capture the range of interplays in and between multiple scales and spaces that characterises the formulation of a states' diaspora strategies, their evolution over time, and their variegated material outcomes. Alternative conceptualizations of the 'sending state' as a multi-sited network of governing entities disrupts binary readings of diaspora space, but it is argued here that

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such an approach reproduces top-down views of political agency. The review concludes by suggesting that scholars of diaspora strategies would benefit from exploring assemblage thinking, where a sustained engagement with spatial emergence and distributed socio-material agencies has the potential to reveal the dynamic topological connections through which diasporic spatio-political formations emerge, endure and may be disrupted. This has implications for understanding the impacts of diaspora strategies on individual diasporic subjectivities and ideas of common citizenship.

Introduction

The varied policy initiatives used by states to engage with émigrés and their descendants abroad – known as ‘diaspora strategies’ (Ancien et al 2009) – is of increasing interest to researchers and policymakers. From the ad-hoc patchwork of initiatives adopted mainly by lower-income countries in response to a range of development challenges (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003), the governments of countries across the economic development spectrum are now engaging with their overseas populations in a range of policy fields (Hickey et al 2015). International governing institutions prescribe policies such as dual citizenship, the extension of extra-territorial voting rights and the creation of new investment channels for émigrés because of their potential to accelerate a countries’ economic growth (Nielsen and Riddle 2008). However, scholars working in and across a diverse array of sub-disciplinary areas, such

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as political geography (e.g. Gamlen 2008; Ho 2011; Ragazzi 2009; Collyer 2014), development geography (e.g. Black and King 2004; Piper 2009; Boyle and Kitchen 2014) and skilled mobility (e.g. Geddie 2014; Leung 2014; Lum 2015; Siar 2014), have questioned the assumptions about belonging, territory and identity on which diaspora strategies rest, drawn attention to the wider social and political impacts of such initiatives and challenged simplistic narratives about their effectiveness in achieving economic growth.

The above debates reflect a dynamic conceptualization of diaspora space, which has long existed in wider academic literature (Featherstone et al. 2007). However, there remains a tendency in both research and policy attention around diaspora strategies to reproduce what Dufoix (2011: 7) terms a binary 'centro-periphereic' framing. Dufoix (2011) elaborates centro-peripherality as the assumed existence of a territorial centre and an emigrant population scattered abroad who are, or could be encouraged, to contribute to the development of that centre. This framing remains prominent in the diaspora strategies literature because of the analytical distinctions that are often made between the emigration policies of 'sending' states and the immigration policies of 'receiving' states, in addition to other binaries that frame analysis of migration such as homeland and hostland (Collyer and King 2015). In this review, I explore the ways that specific theorisations of the 'sending state' as a bounded and static operating entity contributes to the reproduction of binary framings of diaspora space, and argue that whilst

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alternatives, such as network governance, have destabilised these binaries, an assemblage approach better captures the dynamic topological connections underpinning diaspora strategies.

Research on diaspora strategies emerged from the sociological literature on what was termed state-led transnationalism (e.g. Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003; Margheritis 2007). It was argued that the bundle of governmental structures and policies designed to engage overseas populations forms part of a states' exertion of sovereignty over migrant transnationalism (Gamlen 2008). This argument however gives the illusion that the sending state is a centrally located set of institutional structures whose varying policies have the power to define overseas populations' political and economic participation in a sending country "exogenous to migrant transnationalism as a dynamic process" (Mügge 2012: 23). As Iskander (2015) observes, diaspora policy-making is a process of creative bricolage, emerging from a government's interactions with a host of different practices being performed by a wide range of actors. Diaspora strategies intersect with, and can be influenced by, everyday identity and subjectivity building processes that change over time and are irreducible to an essentialised affinity to a singular territorial homeland (Ho et al 2015). The concept of the 'sending state' therefore fails to capture the range of interplays in and between multiple scales and spaces that underpin the formulation of a

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states' diaspora strategies, their evolution, and their variegated material outcomes.

Bounded spatial framings that distinguish the sending-state from a diasporic population are beginning to be destabilised by more recent re-theorisations of the state by scholars investigating the global networks of institutional elites, diasporic entrepreneurs and hometown groups involved in formulating and implementing diaspora strategies (Cohen 2015). Such scholarship captures the geographically distributed nature of diasporic engagement by recognising that diasporic spatio-political formations gain shape through wider socio-economic practices reproducing prescriptions about the norms, values and behaviours appropriate for global diasporic subjects (Mullings 2012). However, network accounts of governance can produce elite-centric views of political agency (Dowler and Sharp 2001), and in focusing on the reproduction of abstract economic policies across different scales retain a prominent role for state agendas (Koster 2015).

Subsequent ontological re-conceptualisations of political agency in geography see the state as an ever-shifting set of everyday effects (Jeffrey 2013) and relational socio-material interactions (Müller 2015) taking place across space, and that amalgamate, or assemble, contingently into sovereign-subject relationships. In this reading, sovereign-subject relationships occupy provisional socio-spatial structures that may take different territorial as well as deterritorialised forms, but there is neither a presumption of their prior

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existence nor a hierarchical relationship between them (Anderson and McFarlane 2011). This work has yet to fully influence the diaspora strategies literature specifically, but the assemblage lens has been deployed in studies of diaspora politics (Barrineau 2015) and transnational citizenship (e.g. Mosio and Kangas 2015) to account for the diversity of trajectories that intersect in different spatial nodes, and through which diasporic socio-spatial forms materialise. Assemblage approaches in political geography have multiple intellectual roots and trajectories (see Robbins and Marks 2009, Dittmer 2013), but in this paper I draw out two features of this scholarship -emergence and socio-materiality- and argue that in revealing the distributed agencies and instabilities that produce, sustain and disrupt spatio-political formations, assemblage approaches can begin to undo some of the unhelpful binaries that characterise studies of diaspora strategies.

The sending state

As scholars from across the social sciences began in the 1990s to flesh out the dimensions and characteristics of emigrants' transnational ties (see Vertovec 1999), the changing formal state institutional arrangements pertaining to emigrant populations also came under increasing scrutiny (e.g. Levitt & de la Dehesa, 2003). Characterized as 'transnationalism from above' or 'state-led transnationalism' (e.g., Margheritis 2007), the term was used to distinguish the transnational policymaking activities of governments from

those of emigrants and hometown associations (e.g. Basch et al. 1994). The forces at work in so-called 'host' or 'receiving states' (such as labour market conditions, schooling, multicultural policies and so forth) that had an impact on the development of transnational networks formed the bulk of scholarship (e.g. Portes and Rumbaut 2006). However, following dissatisfaction with a reliance on the territorial unit of the bounded nation-state (Levitt 2009), scholarship also turned to political forces in the 'sending state' as one way of apprehending the role of transnational actors and spaces (Délano 2010: 242). Whilst constituting an important attempt to go beyond the methodological nationalism that had previously structured understandings of international migration (see Wimmer & Glick-Schiller 2002), it nonetheless generated a conceptual distinction between sending and receiving states as separable political entities implicated in the production of migrants' trans-border connections.

Scholars elsewhere argued that the development of sending-state mechanisms aimed at pursuing and channelling transnational flows were linked to the wider global economic conditions of liberalization and deregulation (Gamlen 2008; Ragazzi 2009; Varadarajan 2014; Gray 2012). For Levitt and de la Dehesa (2003) the bureaucratic reform of remittance mechanisms, as well as the extension of state services and political rights to nationals abroad, constituted a transnational re-articulation of the state. As such, rather than confirming wider arguments about the diminished

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sovereignty of the territorial nation-state under globalization, these studies highlight the ways that such institutional reforms allowed states to “tap into” and exploit migrants’ global networks, as well as generating new ones (Gamlen 2014).

By and large, geographers working on policies pertaining to overseas populations tend to favour the term ‘diaspora strategies’. Used by Ancien et al (2009) to give coherence to what they identified as a set of highly variable policy initiatives aimed at developing and managing relationships with emigrant populations, ‘diaspora strategies’ captures the salience of homeland affinities as a central tenet underpinning all such initiatives. Unlike the sociological literature on transnationalism, overseas populations were not conceptualised as deterritorialised agents, but linked through their identities to particular territorial homelands. The term diaspora initially referred to a social condition of exile (Safran 1990). However, in contemporary academic parlance, the term lacks a single, widely accepted definition (Brubaker 2005) since it has been deployed to describe both closely knit communities bound together by a shared primordial affinity with a national homeland, as well as the hybridities and instabilities of migrant identities (Werbner 2002). Both usages have long been subject to sustained critique in geography because of the homogenizing tendencies and binary geographical assumptions around home and belonging on which these conceptualizations rest, as well as prioritizing the nation-state as the a priori unit of analysis (Mavroudi 2007).

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In spite of these critiques, the conceptualization of diasporic populations as retaining a sense of belonging to an essentialised 'home' or ancestral nation retains a salience within both the policy and academic literature on the positive links between migration and development (Sinatti and Horst 2014). Such a conceptualization has, via a range of policy mobilities processes including academic scholarship (Dufoix 2011), become a prominent part of the lexicon of international policy discourse as easy shorthand for spatio-temporal imaginaries of globally flexible migrants who retain an interest in homeland development (Délano 2014). The presence of an emotional or social connection to a homeland is considered to be a critical factor impacting on the success of governments' diaspora engagements (Nielsen and Riddle 2008). Therefore, governments are encouraged by global policymakers to retain or develop territorial homeland attachments through, for example, the use of discourses and practices around emigrant citizenship which, it is argued, actively engineer overseas populations to think of themselves as diasporic (Délano and Gamlen 2014).

Academic research into diaspora strategies therefore understands the concept of diaspora to be a malleable claim of national territorial affinity that is deployed by governmental political actors in material and discursive processes of constituency and community building (Sökefeld 2006). Scholars in political science linked the ability of governments to (re)claim the affinity of overseas populations via diasporic citizenship to exercises of sovereignty and

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democratic agency in contexts of the pluralization of emigrant allegiances and the emergence of global cosmopolitan norms (Benhabib 2007). Since often only certain components of citizenship are extended to overseas populations (e.g. Collyer 2014), scholars have argued that diasporic citizenship is little more than a symbolic act of extra-territorial nation-building (Mahieu 2015), a re-ethnicization of long-distance nationalism (Joppke 2003) and/or a pragmatic means of facilitating resource transfer (see Gray 2012).

Such flexible territorial identity work can be interpreted as a form of diasporic governmentality (Gamlen 2014). Largely working from a Foucauldian perspective, it has been argued that the bureaucratic institutions of the state strategically produce differential forms of diaspora membership in response to particular economic and/or political rationalities (Cohen 2015). For example, Ho (2011) recognizes how the uneven nature of Singaporean state provision of citizenship deregulates the transnational mobility of elite émigrés (namely, highly skilled and capital-bearing entrepreneurial subjects) whilst neglecting or excluding others. Therefore, whilst diaspora strategies might reproduce a citizen-sovereign relation for those whose hypermobility, labour and capital can be claimed and understood in policymaking as the diasporic 'citizen ideal' (Kalm 2013: 397), for other types of migrants, the sending- state seeks to close and delimit access to diasporic identity in citizenship practice and discourse (Dickinson and Bailey 2007). As Naujoks (2014) shows, this is related to the need for governments to balance the

potential desirous benefits associated with the deterritorialising forces of transnational and global mobility with the maintenance of territorial integrity and security. Hence, it has been contended that diaspora governance is a practice of sending-state power based on the twin processes of selective deterritorialization and reterritorialization of national citizenship (Ho 2011).

In spite of the increasing use of term diaspora in policy and academic circles to indicate the presence of a national affinity, diasporic populations themselves do not necessarily identify in such ways (Koh 2015; Leung 2015). Whilst early research into diaspora strategies was based on contexts where governmental policies had been developed in response to demands from overseas populations already embedded in dense transnational social fields (Délano and Gamlen 2014), in other contexts it was noted that outreach practices were also being confronted by apathy, critique and/or dissent (Crush et al 2013). This was particularly the case when outreach was linked to ethnonationalism (Biswas 2010); political rivalry or factionalism (Amarasingam and Poologaindran 2016) or where engaging with diasporas would undermine rights or recognition in countries of settlement (McCann 2010). Alternative forms of organizing remittances, skills exchanges and knowledge transfer (such as through hometown associations) were found to have more purchase than those of the official government (Ramachandran 2016), particularly where diasporic groups retain strong regional or local geographical identifications (Mercer et al 2008). Engagement with diaspora strategies

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entails intersectional performances of gender, class and ethnic subject positions, rather than simplistic expressions of long-distance nationalism (Kleist 2008; Page and Mercer 2012). The conceptualisation of diaspora strategies as a practice of extra-territorial out-reach can therefore be challenged by research that shows how diasporic citizenship is also lived, embodied and experienced in multiple ways (Ho et al. 2015; Kallio and Mitchell 2016; Pailey 2016).

The networked state

The state as it is generally used in the above studies of diaspora strategies reflects a specific conceptualization as an objective and measurable organizing matrix of legislatures, delegations and bureaucratic institutions located within a nation-state framework, projecting power extra-territorially via the regulation of networks of emigrant outreach. For example, Ancien et al. (2009) frame the varying nature, scope and strength of policy initiatives pertaining to overseas populations as related to the institutional structures of centralized state government. Furthermore, a focus on single-country case studies further supports the concept of the state as a bounded and centralised set of decision-making institutions (Délano and Gamlen 2014) and obscures the wider global, as well as regionally specific (Délano 2014; Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003) networks and circulations in which diaspora policy-making takes place. As Cohen (2015) has argued, broadening out a reading of the

emigration state to encompass the multi-sited network of actors and practices also involved has the potential to offer a more geographically fluid view of state power.

The idea that governmental initiatives are as joined up as the term 'strategy' implies, and by extension, that the state is a unified and centralized operating entity, has been subject to some critique. Some point to the ad-hoc nature of diaspora policy formulation (Ancien et al 2009) whilst Hickey (2015) argues that diaspora policies are formulated within multiple, sometimes directly opposing, knowledges and agendas around migration management and economic growth. Koh (2015) for instance shows that Malaysia's strategy to expand diasporic membership through the removal of the bumiputra status is undermined by the specific requirements of its talent return migration programme. Elsewhere, other scholars suggest that diaspora policymaking unfolds contingently within global and national geohistorical conditions (Mohan 2008). CHECK FOR COHEN Raj (2015) locates the changing nature of Indian diaspora strategies within the India's transition from colonialism, to independence and liberalization, whilst Délano (2011) traces the evolution of Mexico's diaspora policies within its changing geopolitical relationship with the United States. The above studies demonstrate that diaspora strategies are rarely coherent, or even necessarily a strategy at all, but the outcome of a set of processes of negotiation, dialogue and legitimation between multiple actors operating both within and outside of the state (Iskander 2015).

Diaspora strategies, it is argued, must therefore be understood within a wider set of power relationships associated with global governmentality (Larner 2007). Global institutions such as the World Bank, the European Union and the United Nations have long been a central feature of debates around diaspora strategies, specifically because their ideologies of the way in which migration is understood in relation to economic development has influenced how states have formulated emigrant engagement (Raghuram 2009; Mullings, 2012; Sinatti and Horst 2014; Hickey 2015). For example, rather than viewing the associations between migration and development as negative (as was the case in the debates around brain drain in the 1970s and 1980s, see Bhagwati and Wilson 1989), over the last fifteen years, global institutions prescribed reform of remittance and investment mechanisms as a way of improving the balance of payments for low-income countries affected by emigration (Bastia, 2013). More recently, within the context of a wider global competition for talent (Kuznetsov 2006), skilled return is acknowledged as a diaspora strategy that should be the concern of all states seeking to maintain a competitive edge in the global knowledge economy (Hickey et al 2015; Tetley 2016).

The focus on global governmentalities has drawn attention to a shift of the risk and responsibility for homeland socio-economic transformation from the state to wider networks of individuals, organizations and non-state actors (Pellerin and Mullings 2013). The wider context is the decline of overseas

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development assistance but also, more broadly, the neoliberalization of national economies and the orientation of political rationalities towards the market (Gray 2012; Mullings 2012). In a landmark paper, Lerner (2007) describes the ways that skilled entrepreneurial members of New Zealand's diaspora are constituted by state and non-governmental agency practices as economic-growth bearing subjects, responsible for the development of the New Zealand knowledge economy. As she argues, this reflects the current phase of neoliberal global capitalism whereby migrants, particularly highly mobile, skilled migrants, are encouraged to become self-regulating agents of economic development. Diasporas, once portrayed as 'traitors' are increasingly rendered as patriotic 'development partners' (Iheduru 2011) or national heroes (Rodriguez 2010) for the global neoliberal age.

Within this more networked and spatially distributed view of diaspora strategies, a range of studies detail the ways in which state power operates not via simplistic binary relationships between government institutions and diasporas, one that turns on patriotism or belonging, but by dispersed networks of governing entities with their own particular rationalities. For example, migrant associations are being orientated from emigrant welfare towards hometown development by the transnational entrepreneurial elites and actors involved (Çağlar 2006). 'Webs' of private consultancies, banks, and investment organizations are increasingly involved in diaspora engagement (Cohen 2015). As Cohen argues in the case of Israel, state

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management of émigrés not only mimics, but indeed relies on market actors, whereby value for money, productivity and differential compensation underpin émigré's pursuit of and stratification of return mobility. Elsewhere, others have examined the global networks of scholars, researchers and students that have become incorporated into the development visions of universities and other research institutions that, whilst not directly overseen by formal emigration state institutions, are nonetheless complicit and active agents in the reproduction of state visions of globalizing knowledge economies (Larner 2015).

As the vertical connections among different diaspora governing entities have come under some scrutiny, the sending state itself is being read as a heterogeneous set of rationalizations and practices of power relayed in a capillary manner (Cohen 2015). Scholars have again drawn from Foucault's concept of governmentality to illuminate the variegated social and cultural processes through which diasporic populations are drawn in to governmental projects and policies. Mullings (2012) has argued that engagement with outreach is related to individuals' (re)productions of elite and class positionalities, whilst others have noted the critical role of performances of gender identities as a pivotal axis in and through which diaspora engagement is made (Kleist 2008). Both Leung (2015) and Larner (2015) have traced the ways in which mobile academics negotiating careers draw on opportunities offered by the globalizing institutional ambitions of universities, thereby

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reproducing state strategies around the diaspora knowledge economy. Together, these studies recognize the dispersed rationalities that come together in diaspora strategies to “render[s] specific subjects and spaces intelligible and consequently governable” (Mullings 2011: 419).

New directions in diaspora strategies: the state as assemblage

The above more decentered notion of the sending state is critical to apprehending the multiple locations through which diaspora strategies are reproduced beyond the formal domains of national government intervention (Cohen 2015) and the geographically distributed nature of political agency (Leung 2015). Within political geography more broadly, networked forms of governance are however seen as problematic because they continue to focus on the reproduction of abstract political projects, leading to a hierarchical and elite-centric view of political agency that is assumed to be stable (Koster 2015). The spatial metaphor of what Ferguson and Gupta (2002) term ‘verticality and encompassment’, is commonly used to describe such processes; that is, an idea of the state as either the container of, or above, the realms of civil society, family and community (Jeffrey 2015: 67). Despite being difficult to disentangle such realms (Fluri 2015), such a conceptualization continues to circulate in studies of diaspora strategies, since the significances of diaspora strategies to political, social or economic life are largely understood as negotiated by institutions, elites or entrepreneurs and linked to

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master-processes (Gamlen 2014), often neglecting the practiced, lived and often mundane forces that give meaning and shape to diasporic citizenship formations (Erdal 2016).

Recent scholarship in political geography challenges the hierarchies of networked governance approaches by conceiving of the state as a continually “worked on terrain of relationality” involving forces, agents and non-human materialities cohering in particular everyday moments to generate state-like effects (Navaro-Yashin 2012: 214). Rather than privilege a reading of the state as a set of pre-existing structures or institutions operating at and through different scales therefore, this work sees state structures as assembled through the varying alignments between heterogeneous elements. Alignments are made not through a fixed set of properties of those elements, but the relations of exteriority through which those elements become articulated with one another (Featherstone 2011), as well as the interworkings of the vital forces of affect and embodiment (Bennett 2010). In drawing attention to the spatially and historically specific articulations and co-functioning of heterogeneous elements that comprise state effects, spatio-political formations (such as the nation-state, or transnational political communities) are understood as emergent through distributed agencies (Anderson and McFarlane 2011). Such an approach privileges neither spatial fixity or fluidity as the organising concepts of state-subject relations: spatio-political forms derive their particular shape from the historically rooted trajectories of different

components, alignments between which may be broken or reshaped into different forms as new elements enter (Koster 2015).

There are three features of this reading of spatio-political formation that I argue here may better capture the multifarious nature of diaspora strategies than either the centralised or networked view of the sending state. First, in its commitment to emergence and provisionality of political structures, an assemblage approach offers a ways to broaden understandings of the forces that may contribute to the instabilities and contradictions of the spatial forms produced through diaspora strategies. Global political and economic factors are normatively understood as giving rise to instabilities such as the tension between deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation (Gamlen 2014), but these factors only partially account for the ways that such spatial forms persist, or are disrupted over time. There is a tendency to marginalise the socio-cultural contexts (Ho 2011) and affective forces (Dickinson 2015) both passively and actively involved in shaping how states formulate diasporic engagements, and that have subsequent outcomes both for individual diasporic subjectivities and stratified ideas of common citizenship.

As an example, Andrucki (2016) details how skilled white return migration to South Africa materialises when the political economic conditions that give rise to a desire for particular tacit skills articulates with returnees' affective capacities. As the matrix of state and non-state actors involved in return strategies utilise these affective capacities to trigger further return,

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subsequent ripple effects propel the return mobility of unintentionally mostly white bodies, which runs counter to the broader common citizenship ideals desired by the post-apartheid South African state. As well as highlighting the embodied agencies contributing to some of the instabilities that can characterise diaspora strategies, this example also indicates the need for further research on how and why instabilities emerge or may be resolved, and the forms of citizenship arising as a result. This research should go beyond an idea that a network of institutions and elites with specific political and economic agendas in mind retain fixed abilities to shape the geographies of diaspora engagement in the ways they want; rather there are multiple different social and affective topological connections that not only sustain but may also disrupt, diasporic socio-spatial formations.

Second, reading the state as the outcome of the coherence or co-functioning of varied components in particular geographical and temporal contexts captures the distributed human and non-human agencies that produce differently territorialized and deterritorialized spatio-political formations (Jeffrey 2013). Although it is widely recognised that diaspora is an inherently relational identity produced when particular individual identities become defined against others' (Gilroy, 1993), materialities also matter to their actualisations (Barrineau 2015). For instance, the trajectories of components such as passports give shape to the ability of people to cross borders, or be contained by them (Amoore 2006); transport infrastructures

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(re)configure the navigabilities of transnational distance (Burrell 2016); and computer algorithms mediate experimentations in diasporic citizenship (Lim et al 2016; Kang 2016). These material aspects are normatively understood as existing outside of diasporic citizenship formations, but as Tolia-Kelly (2004) has shown, the qualities of the non-human nonetheless impacts on processes of diasporic subject-making as well as the geographical shape that diasporic relations take (as hybrid, territorialised etc). For instance, the relations between people, objects, emotions and discourses may stabilise into particular spatial patterns of remittance giving over longer periods of time (Rubinov 2014), but such patterns could also be punctuated by events like a natural disaster that disrupt these actualisations whilst materialising them into new spatial forms (Sheller 2013). Scholars investigating diaspora strategies could ask how people who may have the capacity to be rendered as politically meaningful diasporic subjects to national governments, are made knowable as such, even if only temporarily, through the distributed socio-material relationalities that generate particular types of diasporic citizenship spatial formations.

Readings of the state-as-assemblage have also led geographers to focus in on the sites where (geo)political articulations between people/events/nonhumans take shape (Dittmer 2013), both in terms of the affective qualities and forces that produce circulations, as well as the connections that subsequently become made to other times and spaces

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(McFarlane 2009). Foucauldian approaches to the emigration state have investigated the range of different sites, such as meetings, conferences and forums, where overseas populations become interpellated as diasporic subjects by the state, often paying particular attention to the politics of knowledge and representation as well as performances of subject positions found therein (e.g. Omelaniuk 2016). However, rather than focus only on the internal relations *within* sites, an assemblage approach examines the relations and trajectories *between* sites (Featherstone, 2011: 140) which can also encompass the sorts of more mundane locations arguably neglected in mainstream political geography scholarship (Jeffrey 2015) as well as that of the diaspora strategies literature (Dickinson 2015). Such sites may include everyday spaces like gardens or markets (Rios and Watkins 2016) or pastoral landscapes of socio-natures (Fryer and Lehtinen 2016), where assemblages of codes, regulations and ecologies shape peoples' translocal spatial practices. Such an approach captures the connections between practices and processes occurring in different sites, and that contribute to the spatial dynamics of displacement as well as connection.

Conclusion

The rise of diaspora-centred development as a strategy for the global neoliberal world has led to growing interest in governments' attempts to engage overseas populations in national economic and political projects. But analysis of the effectiveness and impacts of varied initiatives requires that we

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take into consideration the geographical dynamics of diaspora space. This paper has explored three considerations of the 'sending' state that underpin research into the geographies of diaspora strategies, and argued that theorising diaspora strategies as emergent forms of statecraft better captures the multifaceted nature of diasporic citizenship building.

The literature on the transformation of the central bureaucratic institutions of national governments under conditions of globalization has made important contributions to studies of the geographies of transnationalism. By examining the transnationalization of the policy fields of citizenship, remittances and investment, this literature demonstrated that states can exert sovereignty over transnational space through the extra-territorial projection of political and economic power. As such, this work formed an important counter-part to studies of immigration policy fields that have also been critical in 'grounding' studies of transnational mobility in the uneven topographies of political power that differentially territorialize and re-territorialize diaspora citizenship. However, this conceptualisation of the sending state has undergone criticism for its reductive view of governmental power as the main fulcrum for diaspora engagement. By linking diaspora engagement to a range of agendas spread across transnational networks -including the identity politics and accumulative projects of non-state organisations and diaspora actors- this literature has helped to undo some of the simplistic spatial binaries and categorizations of diaspora citizenship produced as a result of conceiving of the state as a

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bounded political entity (e.g. 'sending' /'receiving' states'; homeland/hostland; state and diaspora). In revealing the capillary-like nature of power through which diasporic citizenship formations are produced, this research points to the multiple spaces and scales through which diaspora identities are governed through diaspora strategies, and drawn attention to the varied outcomes, such as the reproduction of exclusionary positionalities that stem from differential forms of diaspora engagement.

Recent scholarship in political geography has argued that 'the state' is not an easily-identifiable set of institutions or policies, but a dispersed set of everyday practices that cohere in particular socio-temporal contexts into state-like effects. Such an approach gives scholars of diaspora strategies the theoretical tools to engage with a more distributed conceptualization of power and agency. Assemblage thinking encourages researchers of diaspora strategies to move beyond master-processes, such as capitalist accumulation or extraterritorial exertions of sovereignty, to reveal the role played by the everyday affective and socio-material forces that give shape to diaspora engagement. Investigating the contingencies of the human and non-human relationalities that coalesce into different types of transnational socio-spatial formations has the potential for revealing the multiple topological

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connections through which diasporic citizenship is, or may be, convened, in more inclusive and meaningful ways.

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